2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east. Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and densest and most ancient in the middle.

The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria. His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.
[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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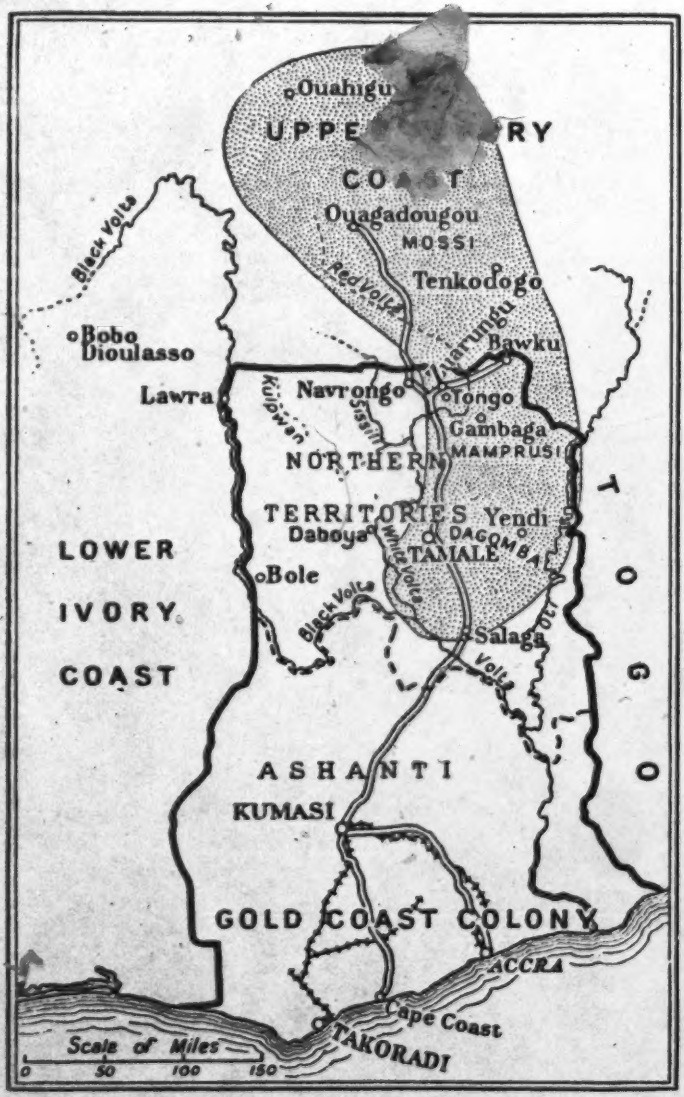

BOUNDARIES OF THE GOLD COAST

The dotted portion shows the area occupied by Mole-Dagbane speaking peoples

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2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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and the Earth when representatives of the various clans gather to perform one of the great annual ceremonies, as their ritual obligations compel them to, even though they are nowadays divided into two hostile camps. For these are the occasions when the essential unity of Tɛnzugu—a unity in relation to which the six clans rank merely as *yizugɔt*—can rightly be insisted upon, when frank reproaches verging on warnings of spiritual retribution can be directed against the destroyers of this unity.

Yet in other situations the component maximal lineages of a particular Tɛnzugu clan are referred to as its *yizugɔt*. Thus, in connexion with their distinct ritual offices in the cult of the External *Bɔyar* or their divergent clanship linkages, the three maximal lineages of Bunkiuk are always described as *yizugɔt*. For, like the clan in relation to its neighbour clans, the maximal lineage forms a distinct genealogical and residential unity within the clan settlement. Looked at from within, each maximal lineage is a relatively autonomous integral unit, the majority of whose members live close together inside its social boundaries, which are defined in relation to the other lineages of the clan in the same way as those of the clan settlement are defined in relation to neighbouring clans. The difference is one of degree only, the social boundaries of a lineage within a clan being more fluid than those of a clan. The stability of a settlement rests on the equilibrium of its sections with one another, and this depends upon their being precisely differentiated from one another.

The Sections of Tongo

Tongo proper (Tɔŋ-Nayiri) has four *yizugɔt*—Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorɔg. Two roads, laid down some years ago by the Administration, which intersect almost at right angles where the Resthouse stands (see map at end of book), by chance afford a convenient set of co-ordinates for describing its layout. Puhug occupies most of the south-western quadrant and a corner of the south-eastern quadrant, most of which is Kuorɔg. Seug is an irregular block in the north-eastern quadrant. Guŋ is divided: part of it, Guŋ proper, lies across the watercourse to the west of Puhug; but the majority of its members live in the north-western quadrant, in a broad wedge between Zubiuŋ and Gbizug known as Dekpieŋ. A few Guŋ homesteads also lie on the border between Seug and Zoo. Nevertheless, scattered as it is, Guŋ constitutes a single *yizug* in all corporate affairs except those connected with modern administrative demands. In the latter the local criterion prevails, Dekpieŋ having its own headman and the Guŋ homesteads at Seug coming under the supervision of the Seug headman. Members of all four sections live at Zoo and at Gbambee, but they always act with their respective sections in matters of common concern.

The names of these sections are typical of section and settlement names all over the country. Puhug gets its name from an ancient *puhug* or *puzuga* (*Tamarindus Indica*) tree, which is said to have stood at the edge of the sacred dancing-ground in the centre of the section from time immemorial. It died long ago, but old men still remember seeing its stump. Guŋ is called after the silk-cotton tree (*Ceiba Pentendra*; Talni, *guŋ*) so common in the country. Trees of all kinds, and especially those as tall as the

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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Isolation.

An important economic feature of the district is its distance from the coast, 500 miles, and from rail head, 350 miles. This means expensive road transport precluding the possibility of all but local exports with the present prices ruling on the world's markets. The isolation is further emphasised by the fact that the main road to the South is not yet all-weather. Motor traffic is cut off from the end of May until the end of November, when the Volta rivers wash away the temporary dry season drifts. 131 491

European Contact.

Contact with Europeans has taken place only comparatively recently, *i.e.*, within about the last forty years, and for some time, soldiers, police, and political officers were the only "white men" known to the people; these were followed by medical and veterinary officers. It was not until 1930 that an agricultural officer visited the district in the growing season, and then only temporarily upon locust control duty. Observations made during this visit are recorded in the Department's Year Book for 1930 (4). In 1932 practically new ground had to be broken, and a natural suspicion, increased by not altogether unfounded rumours of direct taxation, had to be overcome before the people's confidence was obtained. The importance of this confidence for the success of our work requires no stressing. 177

Climate.

The main climatic feature of the district is a well defined rainy season, lasting from the beginning of April until the middle of November, alternating with an intensely dry season. The mean annual rainfall at Zuarungu is 43.92″, at Navrongo 47.83″, and at Bawku 41.20″. Monthly means are given in Appendix I. The whole of North Mamprusi is included in the Sudanese Climatic Zone (5). Rainbearing winds come from the South East, but tornadoes from the East and North East mark the beginning and the end of the rainy season; then precipitations are very localised. From November until February or March the "harmattan" (5) wind blows with varying severity. 132

Vegetation—Trees.

The natural vegetation of North Mamprusi is "tree savannah" (6) with fringing forest along the banks of the larger rivers. In the populated parts of the district only trees of economic value, 137